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CONTACT: Rhea Basroon
Brushfire Inc.
973-871-1715
Michelle Goldstein
Brushfire Inc.
973-871-1726

New Webcast Provides Answers to Tax Amnesty Questions For New Jersey Taxpayers

TRENTON -- A webcast that provides information to individual taxpayers, business owners and tax professionals interested in taking part in New Jersey's Tax Amnesty program has been posted at TaxAmnesty.nj.gov. The webcast will remain on the site until the Amnesty program ends June 15.

The webcast features Mark Wintermute, administrator of the Tax Amnesty program, answering a number of questions that have been posed by taxpayers and tax professionals regarding the program.

In addition to a brief overview of the program, Wintermute addresses questions about payment, taxes on Internet purchases and offshore tax havens, and audits. Wintermute also offers information pertinent to tax professionals who are assisting clients with compliance. Viewers can access the portion of the Webcast most applicable to their particular situation.

"The State wants to make Tax Amnesty as user-friendly as possible," Wintermute said. "These are tough economic times, and people who have been compliant in the past have fallen behind on their taxes.

"The program is designed to help them get a fresh start while collecting money that New Jersey can use for needed programs and services," he said. "After the Amnesty ends, the Division of Taxation will be able to dedicate more resources to collecting from hard-core, delinquent taxpayers."

Under the Tax Amnesty, the State will waive penalties and half the interest owed on unpaid taxes for tax returns due on or after January 1, 2002, and before February 1, 2009. At the end of the Amnesty program, taxpayers still owing taxes will be subject to the entire amount as well as a new five percent penalty.

Since the Amnesty program was launched on May 4 through Monday, June 1, the Division of Taxation has collected \$64.4 million in payment transactions that average \$1,100 each. The Amnesty is aimed at providing a lifeline to taxpayers who may be overwhelmed with accumulating interest and fees.

"We are pleased with the response to the amnesty program," said State Treasurer David Rousseau. "In addition to the amnesty program being user-friendly, our outreach is more diversified than any previous campaign in New Jersey, all of which contributes to maximizing taxpayer participation," Rousseau said.

The Amnesty Hotline (1-800-781-8407) has been averaging more than 3,800 calls a day. It is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m., and on Saturday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. On June 15, the hotline will accept calls until midnight.

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